

PCT

NOTIFICATION OF ELECTION
(PCT Rule 61.2)

To:

Assistant Commissioner for Patents
 United States Patent and Trademark
 Office
 Box PCT
 Washington, D.C.20231
 ETATS-UNIS D'AMERIQUE

Date of mailing (day/month/year)

14 April 2000 (14.04.00)

in its capacity as elected Office

International application No.

PCT/US99/20182

Applicant's or agent's file reference

7275/JB

International filing date (day/month/year)

03 September 1999 (03.09.99)

Priority date (day/month/year)

18 September 1998 (18.09.98)

Applicant

MORT, Paul, R., III et al

1. The designated Office is hereby notified of its election made:



in the demand filed with the International Preliminary Examining Authority on:

16 March 2000 (16.03.00)



in a notice effecting later election filed with the International Bureau on:

2. The election was

was not

made before the expiration of 19 months from the priority date or, where Rule 32 applies, within the time limit under Rule 32.2(b).

The International Bureau of WIPO 34, chemin des Colombettes 1211 Geneva 20, Switzerland	Authorized officer Kiwa Mpay
Facsimile No.: (41-22) 740.14.35	Telephone No.: (41-22) 338.83.38

PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

09/786,936

From the INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY

To:

THE PROCTER & GAMBLE COMPANY
Attn. Reed, David T.
One Procter & Gamble Plaza
CINCINNATI, OHIO 45202
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

D. Daesbitt J.W. Reet / NTC
 D. Watty / E.C. atty / P.A. / file
 Sant #11A

PCTNOTIFICATION OF TRANSMITTAL OF
THE INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT
OR THE DECLARATION

(PCT Rule 44.1)

No CL

Applicant's or agent's file reference 7275/JB	Date of mailing (day/month/year) 16/12/1999
International application No. PCT/US 99/ 20182	International filing date (day/month/year) 03/09/1999
Applicant THE PROCTER & GAMBLE COMPANY et al.	

1. The applicant is hereby notified that the International Search Report has been established and is transmitted herewith.

Filing of amendments and statement under Article 19:

The applicant is entitled, if he so wishes, to amend the claims of the International Application (see Rule 46):

When? The time limit for filing such amendments is normally 2 months from the date of transmittal of the International Search Report; however, for more details, see the notes on the accompanying sheet.

Where? Directly to the International Bureau of WIPO
34, chemin des Colombettes
1211 Geneva 20, Switzerland
Facsimile No.: (41-22) 740.14.35

For more detailed instructions, see the notes on the accompanying sheet.

2. The applicant is hereby notified that no International Search Report will be established and that the declaration under Article 17(2)(a) to that effect is transmitted herewith.

3. With regard to the protest against payment of (an) additional fee(s) under Rule 40.2, the applicant is notified that:

the protest together with the decision thereon has been transmitted to the International Bureau together with the applicant's request to forward the texts of both the protest and the decision thereon to the designated Offices.

no decision has been made yet on the protest; the applicant will be notified as soon as a decision is made.

4. Further action(s): The applicant is reminded of the following:

Shortly after 18 months from the priority date, the International application will be published by the International Bureau. If the applicant wishes to avoid or postpone publication, a notice of withdrawal of the International application, or of the priority claim, must reach the International Bureau as provided in Rules 90bis.1 and 90bis.3, respectively, before the completion of the technical preparations for International publication.

Within 19 months from the priority date, a demand for International preliminary examination must be filed if the applicant wishes to postpone the entry into the national phase until 30 months from the priority date (in some Offices even later).

Within 20 months from the priority date, the applicant must perform the prescribed acts for entry into the national phase before all designated Offices which have not been elected in the demand or in a later election within 19 months from the priority date or could not be elected because they are not bound by Chapter II.

Name and mailing address of the International Searching Authority  European Patent Office, P.B. 5818 Patentstaan 2 NL-2280 HV Rijswijk Tel. (+31-70) 340-2040, Tx. 31 651 epo nl, Fax (+31-70) 340-3016	Authorized officer Véronique Baillou
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NOTES TO FORM PCT/ISA/220

These Notes are intended to give the basic instructions concerning the filing of amendments under article 19. The Notes are based on the requirements of the Patent Cooperation Treaty, the Regulations and the Administrative Instructions under that Treaty. In case of discrepancy between these Notes and those requirements, the latter are applicable. For more detailed information, see also the PCT Applicant's Guide, a publication of WIPO.

In these Notes, "Article", "Rule", and "Section" refer to the provisions of the PCT, the PCT Regulations and the PCT Administrative Instructions respectively.

INSTRUCTIONS CONCERNING AMENDMENTS UNDER ARTICLE 19

The applicant has, after having received the international search report, one opportunity to amend the claims of the international application. It should however be emphasized that, since all parts of the international application (claims, description and drawings) may be amended during the international preliminary examination procedure, there is usually no need to file amendments of the claims under Article 19 except where, e.g. the applicant wants the latter to be published for the purposes of provisional protection or has another reason for amending the claims before international publication. Furthermore, it should be emphasized that provisional protection is available in some States only.

What parts of the international application may be amended?

Under Article 19, only the claims may be amended.

During the international phase, the claims may also be amended (or further amended) under Article 34 before the International Preliminary Examining Authority. The description and drawings may only be amended under Article 34 before the International Examining Authority.

Upon entry into the national phase, all parts of the international application may be amended under Article 28 or, where applicable, Article 41.

When?

Within 2 months from the date of transmittal of the international search report or 16 months from the priority date, whichever time limit expires later. It should be noted, however, that the amendments will be considered as having been received on time if they are received by the International Bureau after the expiration of the applicable time limit but before the completion of the technical preparations for international publication (Rule 46.1).

Where not to file the amendments?

The amendments may only be filed with the International Bureau and not with the receiving Office or the International Searching Authority (Rule 46.2).

Where a demand for international preliminary examination has been/ is filed, see below.

How?

Either by cancelling one or more entire claims, by adding one or more new claims or by amending the text of one or more of the claims as filed.

A replacement sheet must be submitted for each sheet of the claims which, on account of an amendment or amendments, differs from the sheet originally filed.

All the claims appearing on a replacement sheet must be numbered in Arabic numerals. Where a claim is cancelled, no renumbering of the other claims is required. In all cases where claims are renumbered, they must be renumbered consecutively (Administrative Instructions, Section 205(b)).

The amendments must be made in the language in which the international application is to be published.

What documents must/may accompany the amendments?

Letter (Section 205(b)):

The amendments must be submitted with a letter.

The letter will not be published with the international application and the amended claims. It should not be confused with the "Statement under Article 19(1)" (see below, under "Statement under Article 19(1)").

The letter must be in English or French, at the choice of the applicant. However, if the language of the international application is English, the letter must be in English; if the language of the international application is French, the letter must be in French.

NOTES TO FORM PCT/ISA/220 (continued)

The letter must indicate the differences between the claims as filed and the claims as amended. It must, in particular, indicate, in connection with each claim appearing in the international application (it being understood that identical indications concerning several claims may be grouped), whether

- (i) the claim is unchanged;
- (ii) the claim is cancelled;
- (iii) the claim is new;
- (iv) the claim replaces one or more claims as filed;
- (v) the claim is the result of the division of a claim as filed.

The following examples illustrate the manner in which amendments must be explained in the accompanying letter:

1. [Where originally there were 48 claims and after amendment of some claims there are 51]:
"Claims 1 to 29, 31, 32, 34, 35, 37 to 48 replaced by amended claims bearing the same numbers; claims 30, 33 and 36 unchanged; new claims 49 to 51 added."
2. [Where originally there were 15 claims and after amendment of all claims there are 11]:
"Claims 1 to 15 replaced by amended claims 1 to 11."
3. [Where originally there were 14 claims and the amendments consist in cancelling some claims and in adding new claims]:
"Claims 1 to 6 and 14 unchanged; claims 7 to 13 cancelled; new claims 15, 16 and 17 added." or
"Claims 7 to 13 cancelled; new claims 15, 16 and 17 added; all other claims unchanged."
4. [Where various kinds of amendments are made]:
"Claims 1-10 unchanged; claims 11 to 13, 18 and 19 cancelled; claims 14, 15 and 16 replaced by amended claim 14; claim 17 subdivided into amended claims 15, 16 and 17; new claims 20 and 21 added."

"Statement under article 19(1)" (Rule 46.4)

The amendments may be accompanied by a statement explaining the amendments and indicating any impact that such amendments might have on the description and the drawings (which cannot be amended under Article 19(1)).

The statement will be published with the international application and the amended claims.

It must be in the language in which the international application is to be published.

It must be brief, not exceeding 500 words if in English or if translated into English.

It should not be confused with and does not replace the letter indicating the differences between the claims as filed and as amended. It must be filed on a separate sheet and must be identified as such by a heading, preferably by using the words "Statement under Article 19(1)."

It may not contain any disparaging comments on the international search report or the relevance of citations contained in that report. Reference to citations, relevant to a given claim, contained in the international search report may be made only in connection with an amendment of that claim.

Consequence if a demand for international preliminary examination has already been filed

If, at the time of filing any amendments under Article 19, a demand for international preliminary examination has already been submitted, the applicant must preferably, at the same time of filing the amendments with the International Bureau, also file a copy of such amendments with the International Preliminary Examining Authority (see Rule 62.2(a), first sentence).

Consequence with regard to translation of the international application for entry into the national phase

The applicant's attention is drawn to the fact that, where upon entry into the national phase, a translation of the claims as amended under Article 19 may have to be furnished to the designated/elected Offices, instead of, or in addition to, the translation of the claims as filed.

For further details on the requirements of each designated/elected Office, see Volume II of the PCT Applicant's Guide.

PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

PCT

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

(PCT Article 18 and Rules 43 and 44)

Applicant's or agent's file reference 7275/JB	FOR FURTHER ACTION see Notification of Transmittal of International Search Report (Form PCT/ISA/220) as well as, where applicable, Item 5 below.	
International application No. PCT/US 99/20182	International filing date (day/month/year) 03/09/1999	(Earliest) Priority Date (day/month/year) 18/09/1998
Applicant THE PROCTER & GAMBLE COMPANY et al.		

This International Search Report has been prepared by this International Searching Authority and is transmitted to the applicant according to Article 18. A copy is being transmitted to the International Bureau.

This International Search Report consists of a total of 3 sheets.

It is also accompanied by a copy of each prior art document cited in this report.

1. Basis of the report

- a. With regard to the language, the international search was carried out on the basis of the international application in the language in which it was filed, unless otherwise indicated under this item.
 - the international search was carried out on the basis of a translation of the international application furnished to this Authority (Rule 23.1(b)).
- b. With regard to any nucleotide and/or amino acid sequence disclosed in the international application, the international search was carried out on the basis of the sequence listing:
 - contained in the international application in written form.
 - filed together with the international application in computer readable form.
 - furnished subsequently to this Authority in written form.
 - furnished subsequently to this Authority in computer readable form.
 - the statement that the subsequently furnished written sequence listing does not go beyond the disclosure in the international application as filed has been furnished.
 - the statement that the information recorded in computer readable form is identical to the written sequence listing has been furnished

2. Certain claims were found unsearchable (See Box I).

3. Unity of invention is lacking (see Box II).

4. With regard to the title,

- the text is approved as submitted by the applicant.
- the text has been established by this Authority to read as follows:

5. With regard to the abstract,

- the text is approved as submitted by the applicant.
- the text has been established, according to Rule 36.2(b), by this Authority as it appears in Box III. The applicant may, within one month from the date of mailing of this international search report, submit comments to this Authority.

6. The figure of the drawings to be published with the abstract is Figure No.

- as suggested by the applicant.
- because the applicant failed to suggest a figure.
- because this figure better characterizes the invention.

None of the figures.

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International Application No
PCT/US 99/20182

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER
IPC 7 C11D11/00 C11D17/06

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)
IPC 7 C11D

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the International search (name of data base and, where practical, search terms used)

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	WO 97 32954 A (PROCTER & GAMBLE) 12 September 1997 (1997-09-12) page 13 -page 14; claims 5,6	1-5,7-10
X	WO 98 11193 A (UNILEVER PLC ;UNILEVER NV (NL)) 19 March 1998 (1998-03-19) page 3 -page 4; example 1	1,2,8-10
X	WO 98 24876 A (UNILEVER PLC ;UNILEVER NV (NL)) 11 June 1998 (1998-06-11) claims; examples 12,13	1,2,7-10
A	WO 98 20104 A (PROCTER & GAMBLE) 14 May 1998 (1998-05-14) cited in the application claims	1,6 -/-

Further documents are listed in the continuation of box C.

Patent family members are listed in annex.

* Special categories of cited documents :

- "A" document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance
- "E" earlier document but published on or after the International filing date
- "L" document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)
- "O" document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means
- "P" document published prior to the International filing date but later than the priority date claimed

- "T" later document published after the International filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention
- "X" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone
- "Y" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art
- "g" document member of the same patent family

Date of the actual completion of the International search

8 December 1999

Date of mailing of the International search report

16/12/1999

Name and mailing address of the ISA

European Patent Office, P.B. 5616 Patentlaan 2
NL - 2280 HV Rijswijk
Tel. (+31-70) 340-2040, Tx. 31 651 epo nl,
Fax (+31-70) 340-3016

Authorized officer

Pfannenstein, H

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORTInternational Application No
PCT/US 99/20182**C.(Continuation) DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT**

Category	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
A	EP 0 420 317 A (UNILEVER NV ;UNILEVER PLC (GB)) 3 April 1991 (1991-04-03) claims	1

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Information on patent family members

International Application No

PCT/US 99/20182

Patent document cited in search report	Publication date	Patent family member(s)		Publication date
WO 9732954 A	12-09-1997	CA	2247499 A	12-09-1997
		CN	1218500 A	02-06-1999
		JP	11506162 T	02-06-1999
WO 9811193 A	19-03-1998	AU	4704897 A	02-04-1998
WO 9824876 A	11-06-1998	AU	5316898 A	29-06-1998
		EP	0942958 A	22-09-1999
WO 9820104 A	14-05-1998	NONE		
EP 0420317 A	03-04-1991	CA	2026156 A,C	30-03-1991
		DE	69014186 D	22-12-1994
		ES	2063249 T	01-01-1995
		JP	3146599 A	21-06-1991
		JP	7062158 B	05-07-1995
		US	5164108 A	17-11-1992



INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION PUBLISHED UNDER THE PATENT COOPERATION TREATY (PCT)

(51) International Patent Classification ⁷ :		A1	(11) International Publication Number:	WO 00/17304
C11D 11/00, 17/06			(43) International Publication Date:	30 March 2000 (30.03.00)
<p>(21) International Application Number: PCT/US99/20182</p> <p>(22) International Filing Date: 3 September 1999 (03.09.99)</p> <p>(30) Priority Data: 60/100,960 18 September 1998 (18.09.98) US</p> <p>(71) Applicant (for all designated States except US): THE PROCTER & GAMBLE COMPANY [US/US]; One Procter & Gamble Plaza, Cincinnati, OH 45202 (US).</p> <p>(72) Inventors; and</p> <p>(75) Inventors/Applicants (for US only): MORT, Paul, R., III [US/US]; 510 Compton Road, Cincinnati, OH 45215 (US). SULLIVAN, Millard, Edward [US/US]; 3287 Cherryview Lane, North Bend, OH 45052 (US).</p> <p>(74) Agents: REED, T., David et al.; The Procter & Gamble Company, 5299 Spring Grove Avenue, Cincinnati, OH 45217-1087 (US).</p>		<p>(81) Designated States: AE, AL, AM, AT, AT (Utility model), AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BR, BY, CA, CH, CN, CU, CZ, CZ (Utility model), DE, DE (Utility model), DK, DK (Utility model), EE, EE (Utility model), ES, FI, FI (Utility model), GB, GD, GE, GH, GM, HR, HU, ID, IL, IN, IS, JP, KE, KG, KP, KR, KR (Utility model), KZ, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LV, MD, MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, NO, NZ, PL, PT, RO, RU, SD, SE, SG, SI, SK, SK (Utility model), SL, TJ, TM, TR, TT, UA, UG, US, UZ, VN, YU, ZA, ZW, ARIPO patent (GH, GM, KE, LS, MW, SD, SL, SZ, UG, ZW), Eurasian patent (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM), European patent (AT, BE, CH, CY, DE, DK, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, IE, IT, LU, MC, NL, PT, SE), OAPI patent (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, GW, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG).</p> <p>Published <i>With international search report.</i></p>		
<p>(54) Title: CONTINUOUS PROCESS FOR MAKING A DETERGENT COMPOSITION</p> <p>(57) Abstract</p> <p>A continuous process for preparing granular detergent composition including a first step of dry neutralizing an acid precursor of an anionic surfactant with a particulate water-soluble alkaline material in a high speed mixer for a mean residence time of about 0.2 to about 50 seconds, thereby partly or totally neutralizing the acid precursor and producing a dry neutralized material containing the anionic surfactant, in the form of a free-flowing powder; and a second step of agglomerating the free-flowing powder into a detergent agglomerate using an agglomeration binder. The agglomeration binder is preferably a viscous surfactant paste binder. The resulting agglomerates are dry, free-flowing, and have a substantially more narrow particle size distribution, compared to the free-flowing powder, with reduced fine particles and over-sized particles that generally are recycled.</p>				

FOR THE PURPOSES OF INFORMATION ONLY

Codes used to identify States party to the PCT on the front pages of pamphlets publishing international applications under the PCT.

AL	Albania	ES	Spain	LS	Lesotho	SI	Slovenia
AM	Armenia	FI	Finland	LT	Lithuania	SK	Slovakia
AT	Austria	FR	France	LU	Luxembourg	SN	Senegal
AU	Australia	GA	Gabon	LV	Latvia	SZ	Swaziland
AZ	Azerbaijan	GB	United Kingdom	MC	Monaco	TD	Chad
BA	Bosnia and Herzegovina	GE	Georgia	MD	Republic of Moldova	TG	Togo
BB	Barbados	GH	Ghana	MG	Madagascar	TJ	Tajikistan
BE	Belgium	GN	Guinea	MK	The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	TM	Turkmenistan
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BY	Belarus	IS	Iceland	MX	Mexico	US	United States of America
CA	Canada	IT	Italy	NE	Niger	UZ	Uzbekistan
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CM	Cameroon	KR	Republic of Korea	PT	Portugal		
CN	China	KZ	Kazakhstan	RO	Romania		
CU	Cuba	LC	Saint Lucia	RU	Russian Federation		
CZ	Czech Republic	LI	Liechtenstein	SD	Sudan		
DE	Germany	LK	Sri Lanka	SE	Sweden		
DK	Denmark	LR	Liberia	SG	Singapore		
EE	Estonia						

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Inte .onal Application No

PCT/US 99/20182

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

IPC 7 C11D11/00 C11D17/06

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

IPC 7 C11D

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practical, search terms used)

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

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X	WO 98 24876 A (UNILEVER PLC ;UNILEVER NV (NL)) 11 June 1998 (1998-06-11) claims; examples 12,13 ---	1,2,7-10
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"&" document member of the same patent family

Date of the actual completion of the international search

8 December 1999

Date of mailing of the international search report

16/12/1999

Name and mailing address of the ISA

European Patent Office, P.B. 5818 Patentlaan 2
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Tel. (+31-70) 340-2040, Tx. 31 651 epo nl,
Fax: (+31-70) 340-3016

Authorized officer

Pfannenstein, H

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Inte. onal Application No
PCT/US 99/20182

C.(Continuation) DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
A	EP 0 420 317 A (UNILEVER NV ;UNILEVER PLC (GB)) 3 April 1991 (1991-04-03) claims	1

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Information on patent family members

Int. Application No

PCT/US 99/20182

Patent document cited in search report	Publication date	Patent family member(s)		Publication date
WO 9732954	A 12-09-1997	CA 2247499 A		12-09-1997
		CN 1218500 A		02-06-1999
		JP 11506162 T		02-06-1999
WO 9811193	A 19-03-1998	AU 4704897 A		02-04-1998
WO 9824876	A 11-06-1998	AU 5316898 A		29-06-1998
		EP 0942958 A		22-09-1999
WO 9820104	A 14-05-1998	NONE		
EP 0420317	A 03-04-1991	CA 2026156 A,C		30-03-1991
		DE 69014186 D		22-12-1994
		ES 2063249 T		01-01-1995
		JP 3146599 A		21-06-1991
		JP 7062158 B		05-07-1995
		US 5164108 A		17-11-1992

09 / 786936 15

PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

PCT

REC'D 15 JAN 2001

WIPO

PCT

INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION REPORT

(PCT Article 36 and Rule 70)

Applicant's or agent's file reference 7275/JB	FOR FURTHER ACTION	See Notification of Transmittal of International Preliminary Examination Report (Form PCT/IPEA/416)
International application No. PCT/US99/20182	International filing date (day/month/year) 03/09/1999	Priority date (day/month/year) 18/09/1998
International Patent Classification (IPC) or national classification and IPC C11D11/00		
Applicant THE PROCTER & GAMBLE COMPANY et al.		
<p>1. This international preliminary examination report has been prepared by this International Preliminary Examining Authority and is transmitted to the applicant according to Article 36.</p> <p>2. This REPORT consists of a total of <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> sheets, including this cover sheet.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> This report is also accompanied by ANNEXES, i.e. sheets of the description, claims and/or drawings which have been amended and are the basis for this report and/or sheets containing rectifications made before this Authority (see Rule 70.16 and Section 607 of the Administrative Instructions under the PCT).</p> <p>These annexes consist of a total of <input type="checkbox"/> sheets.</p> <p>3. This report contains indications relating to the following items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Basis of the report II <input type="checkbox"/> Priority III <input type="checkbox"/> Non-establishment of opinion with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability IV <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of unity of invention V <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement VI <input type="checkbox"/> Certain documents cited VII <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Certain defects in the international application VIII <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Certain observations on the international application 		

Date of submission of the demand 16/03/2000	Date of completion of this report 26.10.2000
Name and mailing address of the international preliminary examining authority: European Patent Office D-80298 Munich Tel. +49 89 2399 - 0 Tx: 523656 epmu d Fax: +49 89 2399 - 4465	Authorized officer Pfannenstein, H Telephone No. +49 89 2399 8217



**INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY
EXAMINATION REPORT**

International application No. PCT/US99/20182

I. Basis of the report

1. This report has been drawn on the basis of (*substitute sheets which have been furnished to the receiving Office in response to an invitation under Article 14 are referred to in this report as "originally filed" and are not annexed to the report since they do not contain amendments.*):

Description, pages:

1-28 as originally filed

Claims, No.:

1-10 as originally filed

2. The amendments have resulted in the cancellation of:

the description, pages:
 the claims, Nos.:
 the drawings, sheets:

3. This report has been established as if (some of) the amendments had not been made, since they have been considered to go beyond the disclosure as filed (Rule 70.2(c)):

4. Additional observations, if necessary:

V. Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement

1. Statement

Novelty (N)	Yes: Claims 3-6,8-10
	No: Claims 1-2,7
Inventive step (IS)	Yes: Claims
	No: Claims 1-10
Industrial applicability (IA)	Yes: Claims 1-10
	No: Claims

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2. Citations and explanations,

see separate sheet

VII. Certain defects in the international application

The following defects in the form or contents of the international application have been noted:

see separate sheet

VIII. Certain observations on the international application

The following observations on the clarity of the claims, description, and drawings or on the question whether the claims are fully supported by the description, are made:

see separate sheet

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Re Item V

- 1) Reference is made to the following documents:
 - D1 WO-A-9732954
 - D2 WO-A-9811193
 - D3 WO-A-9824876
 - D4 WO-A-9820104, cited in the application
- 2) D1 (claims 5-6, pages 5,13) describes a continuous process for preparing granular detergent agglomerates having a density of at least 650 g/l. Liquid anionic surfactant in acid form neutralized with solid builder including sodium carbonate by agitating 1-30 s in a high speed mixer. The resulting product is then agglomerated in a moderate speed mixer where a coating agent can be added. Coating agent (such as zeolite, carbonate, see page 14) may be regarded as agglomeration binder (see also point VIII,3). Thus the subject-matter of claims 1-2 is not novel (Article 33(2) PCT).

The agglomerate in D1 has a size of 300-600 micrometers. The standard deviation is not disclosed in D1; it is therefore not clear if a standard deviation of less than 2,5 is really different. Thus the subject-matter of claim 7 is not novel.

An additional binder can also be sprayed for purposes of enhancing agglomeration. Binders may be water, anionic or nonionic surfactants, PEG, PAC and citric acid. Thus the subject-matter of claims 3-5 is not inventive (Article 33(3) PCT).

The feature of claim 6 is disclosed for the same purpose in D4 (claims).

The features of claims 8-10 are also disclosed in D1.

To summarize the subject-matter of claim 6, 8-10 is not inventive.

- 3) D2 (example, pages 3-4) and D3 (examples 12-13, claims) describe continuous processes for preparing granular detergent agglomerates having a high density (at least 550 g/l in D2 and 522 or 649g/l in D3). Liquid anionic surfactants in acid form are neutralized with sodium carbonate in a high speed mixer. Said product together with zeolite is then agglomerated in a moderate speed mixer. Zeolite may

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be regarded as agglomeration binder. Thus the subject-matter of claims 1-2 is not novel.

The agglomerates in D3 have a mean size of 100-1000 micrometers. The standard deviation is not described in D3; however, it is not clear if a standard deviation of less than 2,5 mentioned in claim 7 is really different from D3. Thus the subject-matter of claim 7 is not novel.

The features of claims 8-10 are also disclosed as alternatives in D2 and D3.

The features of claim 6 is disclosed for the same purpose in D4 (claims).

To summarize, the subject-matter of claims 6,8-10 is not inventive.

Re Item VII

- 1) Contrary to the requirements of Rule 5.1(a)(ii) PCT, the relevant background art disclosed in the above documents D1 to D3 are not mentioned in the description, nor are these documents identified therein.

Re Item VIII

- 1) There is an inconsistency between the claims and the description. In claim 1 the mean residence time is 0,2-50 s whereas on page 8 said time is preferable.
- 2) It is clear from the description that the following features are essential to the definition of the invention:
 - (1) The particle size distribution of the agglomerates have a mean particle size between 250 and 1200 micrometers and a geometric standard deviation of less than 2,5, see pages 4,6,11.
 - (2) The liquid acid precursor of the anionic surfactant and the particulate alkaline inorganic are introduced **simultaneously** into the high speed mixer, see page 7.
 - (3) The level of surfactant should be more than 15% (high (sic)), see pages 4,5. Since independent claim 1 does not contain these features it does not meet the requirement following from Article 6 PCT taken in combination with Rule 6.3(b) PCT that any independent claim must contain all the technical features essential to the definition of the invention.